

# USDA GLOBAL CHANGE FACT SHEET



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## USDA'S CLIMATE CHANGE ROLE

***Our Commitment:*** Climate change is an extremely important issue for USDA. Agriculture is more sensitive to weather than any other economic sector. We are committed to understanding how global change affects agriculture and forestry and what we can do to mitigate greenhouse emissions from these sectors. We know we can address the global greenhouse gas issue and protect the environment while carefully considering the interests of American farmers, forest landowners, and ranchers. USDA involvement occurs at the highest levels down through research, program development, and implementation staff. Linda Delgado is the point of contact in the Office of the Secretary.

***Coordination Office:*** The Global Change Program Office (now located in USDA's Office of the Chief Economist) coordinates agricultural, rural and forestry issues related to global change. The Office serves as the focal point for coordinating activities with other Federal agencies, interacting with the legislative branch, and represents USDA on U.S. delegations to international climate change meetings. Margot Anderson is the point of contact in the Global Change Program Office.

***Outreach:*** USDA is committed to working with Congress and with agriculture, forestry, and conservation groups on domestic and international policy options on abating greenhouse gas emissions and on sequestering carbon through forestry and agricultural activities. USDA has met several times with Congressional staff and meets frequently with constituent groups to discuss climate change issues. Our research staff frequently present technical work on carbon sinks and new technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We are committed to working with the White House Climate Change Task Force on a comprehensive outreach program. Outreach includes briefings, technical meetings, and workshops. We also conduct outreach through our involvement with the National Assessment on Climate Change and Variability. Our outreach goals are to clarify the science of climate change, understand the unique concerns of our constituents, and work together to find solutions to meet U.S. greenhouse gas goals.

***Domestic Actions:*** We recognize there is significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural sources and increase carbon sequestration on U.S. forest, range, and croplands. We are currently reviewing conservation programs to determine how effective they have been in helping farmers abate greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon. We are also reviewing our research programs to be sure we are maintaining a strong research program on the many aspects of climate change that affect agriculture and enhance the capacity of our farm, forest and rangelands to sequester carbon. We are working with our agencies at USDA, other Federal agencies with climate change responsibilities, with OMB, and with Congressional staff to consider enhancements to our programs.